



**West Valley Demonstration Project
U.S. Department of Energy, West Valley, New York**

**For Immediate Release
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West Valley Demonstration Project Achieves Milestone
11,088th Low-level Cemented Waste Drum Shipped Offsite

Ashford, NY – The Department of Energy reached a project milestone at West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP) on Saturday, June 30, with the shipment of the 11,088th drum of low-level radioactive cemented waste to the Nevada Test Site's waste disposal facility this year. This surpasses the milestone of 9,000 drums scheduled for shipment by June 30, 2007. The shipping campaign, which began last year, will ultimately result in the shipment of approximately 18,000 drums of cemented radioactive waste off-site for permanent disposal.

"Our team at West Valley is committed to steady reductions of waste and continuing cleanup momentum at the West Valley site," said Bryan Bower, U.S. Department of Energy Director of the WVDP. "Based on the project's performance thus far, we are well on our way to emptying the West Valley Demonstration Project's Drum Cell on or ahead of schedule later this year."

WVNSCO has successfully employed a number of strategies to maximize cost efficiency and improved safety during the project. These include developing special shipping containers and a packaging method for the drums, and rail loading and transportation plans to safely ship the 71-gallon containers to Nevada. Approximately 1500 drums were shipped from the West Valley site in 2006. In 2007, WVNSCO modified its methods of packaging and shipping, resulting in greatly improved methods of moving large quantities of drums off-site at considerable cost savings over truck shipping. Based on this new method, the WVDP is currently processing and shipping about 800 drums off-site each week.

The cemented waste being shipped was produced during the 1980s and 1990s through a series of processes that prepared the WVDP for its high-level waste (HLW) vitrification project. During the cement solidification campaigns which produced the drums being

shipped today, low-level radioactive liquids (LLW) were mixed with cement and solidified, reducing the amount of waste that might have been vitrified in conjunction with the high-level (HLW) waste that was vitrified into “glass logs.”

"The success of the shipping campaign so far puts us on target to fully empty the Drum Cell by September 30," Mr. Bower said. "This is a major accomplishment given the fact that there was no shipping plan or mechanism for removing and packing the drums before last year." The Department of Energy identified off-site disposal of the Drum Cell drums as a WVDP objective in 2006.

The Drum Cell project is one in a series of recent work scopes that has significantly reduced the amount of low-level waste stored at the WVDP and the number of facilities needed for radioactive waste storage. Other recent accomplishments include the demolition of 19 structures and continued decontamination of the former reprocessing facility.

DOE also recently completed a design to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission-licensed Disposal Area (NDA). Work on the NDA cap, intended to prevent water infiltration into the waste disposal area, is expected to begin later this year. Since late last year, the DOE, New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) and key regulatory stakeholders (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, and New York State Department of Health) have met regularly as a “Core Team” to formulate a 'Way Ahead' to keep decontamination work moving forward. The NDA Cap planning is one of the “Core Team’s” initiatives.

The WVDP is an environmental cleanup and waste management project located about 35 miles south of Buffalo and conducted by the U.S. Department of Energy in cooperation with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority. West Valley Nuclear Services Company, part of Washington Group International, has managed and operated the WVDP since 1982.

Last week an “Interim End State Completion” contract to conduct the next phase of the cleanup at WVDP was awarded to West Valley Environmental Services, LLC, comprised of Washington Group International; Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc; Environmental Chemical Corporation; and Parallax, Inc.

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